



The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	530600010034
School Name	Central Park International Magnet School
School Address	Elm Street
District Name	Schenectady City School District
School Leader	Jennifer Chatain
Dates of Review	November 12-13, 2014
School Accountability Status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus School
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet

School Configuration (2014-15 data)					
Grade Configuration	K-8	Total Enrollment	694	SIG Recipient	N/A
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2014-15)					
# Transitional Bilingual	N/A	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	0
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2014-15)					
# Special Classes	6	# SETSS	0	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	5
Types and Number of Special Classes (2014-15)					
# Visual Arts	27	# Music	23	# Drama	0
# Foreign Language	10	# Dance	0	# CTE	0
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population		67%	% Attendance Rate		93.2%
% Free Lunch		57%	% Reduced Lunch		
% Limited English Proficient			% Students with Disabilities		30%
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native		0	% Black or African American		35%
% Hispanic or Latino		8%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		19%
% White		37%	% Multi-Racial		
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School		0	# of Assistant Principals		1
# of Deans		0	# of Counselors/Social Workers		3.5
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		0	% Teaching Out of Certification		0
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience		0	Average Teacher Absences		8
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2013-14)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		21%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		18%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)			Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)		
Student Performance for High Schools (2013-14)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		N/A	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		N/A
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2013-14)					
% of 1st year students who earned 10+ credits		N/A	% of 2nd year students who earned 10+ credits		N/A
% of 3rd year students who earned 10+ credits		N/A	4 Year Graduation Rate		N/A
6 Year Graduation Rate		N/A			
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2013-14)					
Reward			Recognition		
In Good Standing			Local Assistance Plan		
Focus District			Focus School Identified by a Focus District		
Priority School					

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2012-13)					
American Indian or Alaska Native		N/A	Black or African American		13%
Hispanic or Latino		16%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander		N/A
White		32%	Multi-Racial		N/A
Students with Disabilities		1%	Limited English Proficient		N/A
Economically Disadvantaged		15%			
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2012-13)					
American Indian or Alaska Native		N/A	Black or African American		9%
Hispanic or Latino		13%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander		N/A
White		26%	Multi-Racial		N/A
Students with Disabilities		1%	Limited English Proficient		N/A
Economically Disadvantaged		15%			
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2012-13)					
American Indian or Alaska Native			Black or African American		
Hispanic or Latino			Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander		
White			Multi-Racial		
Students with Disabilities			Limited English Proficient		
Economically Disadvantaged					

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Secure a new principal who is an instructional leader who can support the mission and vision of the school
2. Increase student achievement by 5% in the areas of math, ELA, and science
3. Have 100% of the teachers participate in professional development focusing on rigor, cognitive engagement, and higher-order thinking
4. Have 100% of the teachers implement an action plan at least four times a year
5. Have the school based support team meet on 100% of the students in need (academically, socially, and emotionally) and identify an intervention plan

Information about the review

- The review was co-led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from the New York State Education Department. The team also included a district representative, and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) representative
- The review team visited a total of 31 classrooms during the two-day review.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff, and parents
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, school wide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- On the date of the review, the principal had been in her position less than two months. The assistant principal’s role has been altered to focus more on instructional leadership rather than solely handling student discipline.
- Due to a family emergency, the representative from the New York State Education Department was not present for one day of the review.

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
2.2	The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4	The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:				D	

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student-learning outcomes.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.2	The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4	The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				D	

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:				D	

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.4	All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:				D	

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
6.2	The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.4	The school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.5	The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:				D	

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being, and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	D
<p>The school has received a rating of <i>Developing</i> for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new school leader has been in her position for two months as of the time of the review and stated that she is currently reviewing school procedures and analyzing data in order to make strategic decisions. Before her arrival, the Building Leadership Team (BLT), which includes representatives from the teaching staff, and the assistant principal (AP), developed the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP). The school leader shared that the goals of the SCEP are fewer in number than previous years, more specific, and more measurable, and that one of the goals, to secure a new principal, has been addressed. The school leader stated she supports the school’s mission/goal to improve school-wide practices and increase student achievement and meets monthly with the BLT to monitor progress on the SCEP goals, including improving student achievement and providing professional development (PD) to staff to support student success. The plan is available in the main office and has been shared with the public at Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and Parent Partnership Team (PPT) meetings as well as at the annual Title I parent meeting, which parents of students receiving services funded by Title I are required to attend. • Due to district-wide budget constraints, the school has lost several key positions, including literacy coaches at the middle school level and student support personnel. The school leader is undertaking a review of procedures, roles, and responsibilities of the remaining staff in order to ensure student needs are met. For example, arrival and dismissal procedures were reviewed and changed. A morning program using middle school students as reading ambassadors to elementary students has been instituted. Discipline referrals have decreased since many students are now inside the school building as the day begins. The roles of paraprofessionals continue to be revised to enable them to play a more active role in supporting instruction. PD has been planned to equip them for this new supportive role. Likewise, the school leader has revamped the role of the AP from one of disciplinarian to instructional leader in the building. The two leaders are beginning to operate as an instructional team to support learning. One example is sharing information from the meetings each leader attends, such as the grade level meetings held by middle school teachers. • Both school leaders spend time each day visiting classrooms and provide feedback to teachers on their instructional practice. Monitoring instruction allows school leaders to identify best practices to share among staff, as well as areas that are challenging. During her meetings with building intervention specialists and district Curriculum and Instruction Coaches (CIC), the school leader shares concerns and directs the work of the coaches strategically. • The school leader collects data from classroom visits, assessments, behavior referrals, and attendance, which inform decisions about school improvement. Teachers collect a range of data, but are not always clear about how they are expected to use this information to meet the needs of subgroups of students. Classroom visits by the review team found little evidence of differentiation. 		

Recommendations:

- School leaders, along with intervention specialists and coaches, should work with teachers to support them in analyzing and using data in order to identify teacher strengths and weaknesses and to plan activities that meet the needs of different subgroups of students, especially in the middle grades.
- School leaders should share high expectations and set challenging targets for student achievement with staff, students, and parents and ensure that teachers raise their expectations of what students can achieve by asking higher-order questions and setting complex tasks that encourage them to think deeply, explain their decisions, and take responsibility for planning and revising work.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student-learning outcomes.

Tenet Rating

D

The school has received a rating of *Developing* for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support.

- The curricula are developed at the district level and disseminated to the schools. School leaders conduct frequent classroom visits during which time they review teacher lesson plans and look for CCLS alignment. School leaders have daily communication with reading coaches, intervention specialists, and district curriculum coaches, which enables them to monitor curriculum implementation.
- Teachers gather assessment data, but do not use this to adapt the curriculum to meet student needs or to ensure that they are college and career-ready. Teachers receive support through coaches and intervention specialists and have instructional materials to use with students, such as the Foundations program.
- Teachers stated that discussions about how data can inform instruction and how action plans support goals are limited because the schedule does not facilitate common planning time. For budget reasons, all students are dismissed at the same time. Teachers, particularly those in grades seven and eight, are not afforded the same professional learning community (PLC) time as teachers in some other buildings in the district. Less frequent time to meet and plan affects the level of consistency across classes and grades. These challenges extend to the inclusion of special area teachers like art, music, and physical education as well. While there is some evidence that English language arts (ELA) and social studies teachers at the middle school level are beginning to work together on some projects, special area teachers have limited opportunity to ensure that the arts, for example, are embedded in the curriculum, which hinders student success.
- Assessments are used to inform the development of quarterly action plans, which contain specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART) goals for students. Teachers are becoming familiar with AimsWeb, a new program this year that provides feedback on student achievement through benchmark assessments. Teachers also use assessments from Fountas and Pinnell and running records to measure reading achievement, as well as interim assessments provided by the district. Teachers create rubrics or checklists to provide feedback to their students; however, a review of the rubrics demonstrated that they primarily assess low-level information, such as “begins

sentence with a capital letter.” In some classes, students are given opportunities to take ownership of their work by completing reflection sheets. For example, students explain how they will rectify weaknesses in their writing based on feedback they have received from the teacher using the scoring rubric and how their revisions will strengthen their work, but this is not consistent across the school. Despite detailed curriculum maps, which outline for each grade which standards to address during each month, during classroom visits the review team found that most teachers did not ask higher-order questions, and rarely gave students verbal feedback.

Recommendations:

- Provide common planning time for teachers with the expectation they will plan together and consistently address and implement higher-level standards in the district-provided curriculum.
- During common planning time, teachers should collaboratively review samples of student work, analyze data, especially for subgroups, and plan curriculum modifications to meet identified needs.
- Teacher should provide students with specific feedback, connected to rubrics, that identifies where the student has achieved well and precisely what the student should do to improve their work.

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

Tenet Rating

D

The school has received a rating of **Developing** for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions.

- School leaders review teacher action plans based on interim assessment data. During classroom visits and meetings with teachers, school leaders assess the implementation of the strategies outlined in the plans and provide feedback on the plans and instruction in the form of notes or a conversation with the teacher. There is no consistent format or template for these plans; however, the school leader has informed teachers which areas she wants addressed. During classroom visits, the review team found that most classrooms had learning targets posted for students as well as “I can” statements to ensure students understood the standards they were working on. Teachers in the focus group explained that they create anchor charts to serve as a reference for students. Charts might list steps, components of cause and effect, or character development, for example.
- Overall, students were compliant in the 31 classrooms visited; however, low-level activities, such as completing packets or worksheets, demonstrated limited student engagement. The review team found little evidence of differentiation in most classrooms or evidence that data is consistently used to modify instruction for students. The school is in the process of implementing a program from the Institute for Learning (IFL) at the University of Pittsburgh that includes accountable talk, and staff shared that teachers are currently being trained in these principles. During classroom visits, the review team found that teachers are not consistently ensuring that students use accountable talk across the school and several teachers stated that their students would not be capable of utilizing this skill, which demonstrated the low expectations these teachers have for their students. Last year the BLT began an initiative to address the culture of low expectations for students by creating a PLC, which explored Carol Dweck’s research on growth mindset by reading her book “Mindset.” However, the review team

did not find evidence of how this PLC improved student success.

Recommendation:

Raise expectations and encourage consistency of practice by:

- involving all teachers and staff in IFL training to ensure consistency of language and understanding of what high expectations mean in practice;
- making its implementation the focus of classroom visits, providing feedback to staff on successes and areas for development, and using data to determine subsequent PD to embed the principles of learning; and
- having intervention specialists, reading specialists, and curriculum coaches model using data to determine instructional focus for Response to Intervention (RTI) students and students with disabilities, in particular, to ensure that instruction reflects their specific needs.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

Tenet Rating

D

The school has received a rating of **Developing** for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health.

- While there are services in the school and throughout the community to support student social and emotional developmental health, these are not consistently coordinated to serve the needs of all students. The school-based support team (SBST) is working with the school leader to establish a comprehensive system by which students are identified and supported, and which enables all staff to meet student needs.
- The SBST, which consists of the guidance counselor, social worker, school psychologist, and intervention specialist, meets weekly to discuss students who have been referred for additional support. Due to budget cuts, there is only one guidance counselor at the middle school level and none at elementary level. The SBST has a system for tracking the referrals and developing behavior plans for students, which is supported by district training. The SBST monitors attendance data on a monthly basis to identify students who are missing significant amounts of school and may require a home visit by school or district staff.
- Teachers stated that not all staff is clear how to obtain support services for their students. The current schedule for staff meetings and planning time indicates few opportunities for the SBST to meet with teachers to explain how the process operates or to share strategies teachers could use in the classroom to support struggling students. The student support focus group shared with the review team that the school leader has not attended all SBST meetings. When questioned about her attendance, the school leader shared that she is rectifying this situation by ensuring that either she or the assistant principal attend every SBST meeting. There is no school-wide curriculum to address student social and emotional developmental health. In previous years, the school adopted Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and some teachers still use some of this program’s techniques and

strategies.

Recommendation:

The school leader should collaborate with the SBST to develop and implement a referral system that is understood and consistently used by all teachers to ensure the social and emotional developmental health of all students is addressed. This collaboration should include:

- a review of the current system with amendments and expansion to include other appropriate student support staff and data sources;
- identification of how leaders will familiarize staff with the revised system, roles, and responsibilities; and
- regular monitoring to ensure that members of staff fully understand and are using the system to support all students.

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

Tenet Rating

D

The school has received a rating of **Developing** for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement.

- The school leader is beginning to make staff, students, and families aware of the high expectations she holds for student success and to create a consistent message. The review team found that the school communicates with parents through letters, progress reports, the school and district websites, and events, such as a “Back to School” night, which was attended by over 300 parents. In addition, several teachers have created weekly class newsletters.
- Although there are few families for who English is not the first language, letters and other documents are translated into Spanish. Additionally, several staff members can translate during meetings or phone calls. The district office provides translators for languages other than Spanish.
- The three parents in the focus group reported that teachers return their calls promptly. While parents stated that there are opportunities to become involved in school activities, they shared that parent involvement in the school is limited. Parents of students on behavior plans receive weekly behavior reports and behavior journals; however, the review team found inconsistent evidence of teachers communicating regularly with the parents of all students across the school.
- There is an active parent teacher organization (PTO) and a parent resource center with flyers and other materials available to make parents aware of services. The goal is to expand the resource center. However, teachers and parents stated that many parents do not know about the available resources, within the or how best to advocate for their children.
- As a requirement of Title I funding, parents must sign a parent-school compact. As an extension of that agreement, a parent partnership team (PPT) has been formed to help strengthen the school-home partnership. As part of the PTO’s and PPT’s commitment to bringing parents into the school, events are being planned, such as a literacy night where parents can learn more about the literacy initiatives,

including gaining a better understanding of CCLS.

- Data is shared with parents through progress reports, report cards, results from interim assessments, and State assessment results. Parents who have internet access can log onto the district-wide data system, Home Access, to monitor their children's grades. Parents without access can receive this information directly from the teacher. The SBST shares data with parents and families of students at risk; however, the review team found that teachers do not consistently share information with parents across the school to empower them to advocate for their children.

Recommendation:

School leaders and appropriate staff should:

- provide parents with training opportunities on the curriculum and data, so that parents can better understand how to support their children's needs;
- publish widely what resources are available and how to access them effectively, so that families can support and advocate for their children; and
- include in the training for parents and staff a lexicon of terms so that parents, staff, and school leaders develop a common language to clarify discussions about raising the achievement of every student.